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EXAMINER

YOUNG, JANELLE N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2618

DATE MAILED: 04/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/799,709	NONAKA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Janelle N. Young	2642	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 March 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 6-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claims 6-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sumner et al. (US Patent 5857018), and further in view of Sonnenberg (US Patent 5987114).

As for claim 6, Sumner et al. teaches an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD); which reads on claimed exchange, distributing or connecting or terminating an incoming call to an available telephone with reference to its priority, comprising:

an class of service (application, internal, or external calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, that is operable to be configured to associate phone numbers, with their priority (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes a first highest priority calls; which reads on claimed an incoming call with high priority waiting to be answered, and a final lowest priority calls; which read on claimed an incoming call with low priority waiting to be answered and which is configured to store in RAM (Fig. 1:19 of Sumner et al.), with reference to the class of service

table; which reads on claimed table; and (Col. 2, line 65-Col. 3, line 20 of Sumner et al.);

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the ACD; which reads on claimed exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call associated in a waiting line or queue; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes the class of service table; which reads on claimed first table, the computer or CPU references the waiting line, determines that the priority of the incoming call is high with reference to the class of service table, and assigns or stores the incoming call into the first highest priority calls; in the waiting line (Col. 2, lines 10-18 and Col. 3, lines 21-36 of Sumner et al.); and

What Sumner et al. does not explicitly teach is the method having a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area.

However, Sonnenberg teaches a method for enabling a plurality of service providers to route calls through a telephone network to called subscribers within a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a different predetermined areas used in a routing system, as taught by Sonnenberg, in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al., because Sumner et al. already teaches calls waiting to be answered into the determined priority, (Col. 1, lines 40-53 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service and a better method and system for routing telephone calls. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

2. As for claims 7-8, Sumner et al. teaches an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD); which reads on claimed exchange, distributing or connecting or terminating an incoming call to an available telephone with reference to its priority, comprising:

an class of service (application, internal, or external calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, that is operable to be configured to associate phone numbers, with their priority (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes a first highest priority calls; which reads on claimed an incoming call with high priority waiting to be answered, and a final lowest priority calls; which read on claimed an incoming call with low priority waiting to be answered and which is configured to store in RAM (Fig. 1:19 of Sumner et al.), with reference to the class of service table; which reads on claimed table; and (Col. 2, line 65-Col. 3, line 20 of Sumner et al.);

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the ACD; which reads on claimed exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call associated in a waiting line or queue; which reads on

claimed waiting table, which includes the class of service table; which reads on claimed first table, the computer or CPU references the waiting line, determines that the priority of the incoming call is high with reference to the class of service table, and assigns or stores the incoming call into the first highest priority calls; in the waiting line (Col. 2, lines 10-18 and Col. 3, lines 21-36 of Sumner et al.); and

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the exchange, wherein if an agent; which reads on claimed one telephone connected with the exchange, becomes available for answering a call waiting to be answered, the controller terminates or handle a first highest priority calls, which reads on claimed high priority, with the agent before handling low priority calls (Abstract and Col. 1, lines 27-30 of Sumner et al.).

What Sumner et al. does not explicitly teach is the method having a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area.

However, Sonnenberg teaches a method for enabling a plurality of service providers to route calls through a telephone network to called subscribers within a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a different predetermined areas used in a routing system, as taught by Sonnenberg, in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al., because Sumner et al. already teaches calls waiting to be answered into the determined priority, (Col. 1, lines 40-53 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service and a better method and system for routing telephone calls. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

3. As for claim 9, Sumner et al. teaches an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD); which reads on claimed exchange, operable to be connected to at least an agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group, and an agent group 2; which reads on claimed second telephone group, both of which include at least one agent; which reads on claimed telephone, comprising:

a class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, that is operable to be configured to associate phone numbers with the agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table, that is operable to be configured to associate the first telephone group with high priority and to associate the second telephone group with lower priority than the first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes a first predetermined area for the first telephone group and a second predetermined area for the second telephone group and which is configured to store, with

reference to the first table, an incoming call waiting to be answered into the first predetermined area or the second predetermined (Col. 4, lines 30-44 of Sumner et al.);

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the exchange, wherein if one telephone becomes available for answering a call waiting to be answered, the computer or CPU terminates a call waiting to be answered with the one telephone with reference to the class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table (Col. 2, line 65-Col.3, line 20 and Col. 4, lines 30-33 of Sumner et al.); and

What Sumner et al. does not explicitly teach is the method having a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area.

However, Sonnenberg teaches a method for enabling a plurality of service providers to route calls through a telephone network to called subscribers within a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a different predetermined areas used in a routing system, as taught by Sonnenberg, in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al., because Sumner et al. already teaches calls waiting to be answered into the determined priority, (Col. 1, lines 40-53 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service and a better method and system for routing telephone calls. The prioritizing system

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taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

4. As for claims 10-11, Sumner et al. teaches an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD); which reads on claimed exchange, operable to be connected to at least an agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group, and an agent group 2; which reads on claimed second telephone group, both of which include at least one agent; which reads on claimed telephone, comprising:

a class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, that is operable to be configured to associate phone numbers with the agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table, that is operable to be configured to associate the first telephone group with high priority and to associate the second telephone group with lower priority than the first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes a first predetermined area for the first telephone group and a second predetermined area for the second telephone group and which is configured to store, with reference to the first table, an incoming call waiting to be answered into the first

predetermined area or the second predetermined (Col. 4, lines 30-44 of Sumner et al.);

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call associated in the first table, the computer or CPU references the class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, determines that the priority of the incoming call is high, and stores the incoming call into the first predetermined area in the waiting table, and/or then if the first telephone becomes ready for answering a call waiting to be answered, the controller terminates a call waiting to be answered in the first predetermined area to the first telephone with reference to the class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table (Col. 2, line 65- Col. 3, line 20 and Col. 4, lines 30-37 of Sumner et al.),

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the ACD; which reads on claimed exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call associated in a waiting line or queue; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes the class of service table; which reads on claimed first table, the computer or CPU references the waiting line, determines that the priority of the incoming call is high with reference to the class of service table, and assigns or stores the incoming call into the first highest priority calls; which reads on claimed first predetermined area, in the waiting line (Col. 2, lines 10-18 and Col. 3, lines 21-36 of Sumner et al.).

What Sumner et al. does not explicitly teach is the method having a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area.

However, Sonnenberg teaches a method for enabling a plurality of service providers to route calls through a telephone network to called subscribers within a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a different predetermined areas used in a routing system, as taught by Sonnenberg, in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al., because Sumner et al. already teaches calls waiting to be answered into the determined priority, (Col. 1, lines 40-53 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service and a better method and system for routing telephone calls. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

5. As for claim 12, Sumner et al. teaches an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD); which reads on claimed exchange, operable to be connected to at least an agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group, and an agent group 2; which reads on claimed second telephone group, both of which include at least one agent; which reads on claimed telephone, comprising:

a class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, that is operable to be configured to associate phone numbers with the agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table, that is operable to be configured to associate the first telephone group with high priority and to associate the second telephone group with lower priority than the first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes a first predetermined area for the first telephone group and a second predetermined area for the second telephone group and which is configured to store, with reference to the first table, an incoming call waiting to be answered into the first predetermined area or the second predetermined (Col. 4, lines 30-44 of Sumner et al.);

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call associated in the first table, the computer or CPU references the class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, determines that the priority of the incoming call is high, and stores the incoming call into the first predetermined area in the waiting table, and/or then if the first telephone becomes ready for answering a call waiting to be answered, the controller

terminates a call waiting to be answered in the first predetermined area to the first telephone with reference to the class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table (Col. 2, line 65- Col. 3, line 20 and Col. 4, lines 30-37 of Sumner et al.),

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the exchange, wherein if one telephone becomes available for answering a call waiting to be answered, the computer or CPU terminates a call waiting to be answered in the first predetermined area with the one telephone with reference to the class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table (Col. 2, line 65-Col.3, line 20 and Col. 4, lines 30-33 of Sumner et al.); and

What Sumner et al. does not explicitly teach is the method having a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area.

However, Sonnenberg teaches a method for enabling a plurality of service providers to route calls through a telephone network to called subscribers within a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a different predetermined areas used in a routing system, as taught by Sonnenberg, in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al., because Sumner et al. already teaches calls waiting to be answered into the determined priority, (Col. 1, lines 40-53 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service and a better method and system for routing telephone calls. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

6. As for claim 13, Sumner et al. teaches an exchange terminating an incoming call to an available telephone with reference to its priority, comprising:

a first interface (Fig. 2:22 & 24 of Sumner et al.) configured to be connected to at least a first telephone and a second telephone, both of which belong to an Agent Group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group (Fig. 2 and Col. 2, lines 33-43, line 20 of Sumner et al.);

a second interface (Fig. 2:26 & 28 of Sumner et al.) configured to be connected to at least the first telephone and a third telephone, both of which belong to a second telephone group – the internal and external position calls are also placed in a waiting line, giving them a similar configuration like the application calls with similar agents at the ends of the waiting lines (Fig. 2 and Col. 2, lines 33-45 of Sumner et al.);

a class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, that is operable to be configured to associate phone numbers with the agent group 1; which reads on claimed first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a class or service (internal or external calls) table; which reads on claimed second table, that is operable to be configured to associate the first telephone group with high priority and to associate the second telephone group with lower priority than the first telephone group (Abstract; Col. 1, lines 44-46; and Col. 4, lines 9-19 of Sumner et al.);

a waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, which includes a first predetermined area for the first telephone group and a second predetermined area for the second telephone group and which is configured to store, with reference to the first table, an incoming call waiting to be answered into the first predetermined area or the second predetermined area (Col. 4, lines 30-44 of Sumner et al.); and

a computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller, configured to control the ACD; which reads on claimed exchange, wherein if the ACD receives an incoming call associated in the class or service (application calls) table; which reads on claimed first table, the computer or CPU references the first table, determines that the priority of the incoming call is high, and stores the incoming call into the first predetermined area in the waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table, then if the first agent; which reads on claimed telephone, becomes ready for answering a call waiting to be answered, the computer or CPU terminates a call in the first predetermined area to the first telephone via the first interface (Fig. 2:22 & 24 of Sumner et al.) with reference to the second table (Col. 2, lines 39-44 of Sumner et al.).

However, Sonnenberg teaches a method for enabling a plurality of service providers to route calls through a telephone network to called subscribers within a first predetermined area and a second predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a different predetermined areas used in a routing system, as taught by Sonnenberg, in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al., because Sumner et al. already teaches calls waiting to be answered into the determined priority, (Col. 1, lines 40-53 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service and a better method and system for routing telephone calls. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

As for claim 14, Sumner et al. teaches an exchange, wherein if the first telephone becomes available for answering a call waiting to be answered, the computer or CPU; which reads on claimed controller:

(a) references the waiting line; which reads on claimed waiting table which handles the agents, which transmits the handling parameters to the computer or CPU (Col. Col. 2, lines 33-45 in correspondence to Col. 3, lines 4-10 of Sumner et al.) ,

(b) terminates or connects or assign a call in the first highest priority calls; which reads on claimed first predetermined area, to the first telephone if each of

the first highest priority call and the final lowest priority calls; which reads on claimed second predetermined area, in the waiting line has at least one call to be answered (Col. 3, lines 21-36 of Sumner et al.).

7. Claims 15 -17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sumner et al. (US Patent 5857018) and further in view of Sonnenberg (US Patent 5987114), and further in view of Arbel et al. (US Patent 5276731).

As to claim 15, Sumner et al. teaches priority level of connected to at least first and second telephone (agent) groups, each of which includes at least one telephone or agent. In addition, Sonnenberg teaches different predetermined areas used in a routing system (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

What Sumner et al. and Sonnenberg do not explicitly teach is the method of assigning calls to waiting table if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is not in the first table.

However, Arbel et al. teaches that a method and apparatus for handling incoming calls operable to be connected to at least first and second telephone groups, each of which includes at least one telephone, comprising a controller configured to control the exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call, the controller:

references the first table; and

assigns the first predetermined area in the waiting table to the call if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is in the first table, and assigns the second predetermined area in the waiting table to the call if no

telephone is available and the phone number of the call is not in the first table and/or then if the first telephone becomes available for answering a call to be answered (Col. 9, lines 51-57 of Arbel et al.), the controller:

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a re-routing program, as taught by Arbel et al., in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al. in view of Sonnenberg, because Sumner et al. already teaches as answering and connecting phone calls (Abstract of Sumner et al.). In addition, Sonnenberg teaches the assigning of calls within predetermined area.

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in connecting calls waiting to be answered. This prevents the call recipient from missing a business opportunity from an "important customer" or high priority call that may be left unanswered when there is large volume of incoming calls. Again, the "overflow" feature is an old and well known.

8. As to claim 16, Sumner et al. teaches priority level of connected to at least first and second telephone (agent) groups, each of which includes at least one telephone or agent. In addition, Sonnenberg teaches different predetermined areas used in a routing system (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

What Sumner et al. and Sonnenberg do not explicitly teach is the method of assigning calls to waiting table if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is not in the first table.

However, Arbel et al. teaches that a method and apparatus for handling incoming calls operable to be connected to at least first and second telephone groups, each of which includes at least one telephone, comprising a controller configured to control the exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call, the controller:

references the first table;

terminates a call in the first predetermined area to the telephone if each of the first predetermined area and second predetermined area in the waiting table has at least one call to be answered (Col. 7, line 42-Col. 8, line 5 & 16-23 of Arbel et al.); and/or

assigns the first predetermined area in the waiting table to the call if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is in the first table, and assigns the second predetermined area in the waiting table to the call if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is not in the first table and/or then if the first telephone becomes available for answering a call to be answered (Col. 9, lines 51-57 of Arbel et al.), the controller:

terminates a call waiting to be answered in the first predetermined area to the first telephone if each of the first predetermined area and the second predetermined area in the waiting table has at least one call waiting to be answered (Col. 12, line 50-Col. 13, line 13 of Arbel et al.).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a re-routing program, as taught by Arbel et al., in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al. in view of Sonnenberg, because Sumner et al.

already teaches as answering and connecting phone calls (Abstract of Sumner et al.).

In addition, Sonnenberg teaches the assigning of calls within predetermined area.

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in connecting calls waiting to be answered. This prevents the call recipient from missing a business opportunity from an “important customer” or high priority call that may be left unanswered when there is large volume of incoming calls. Again, the “overflow” feature is an old and well known.

9. As to claim 17, Sumner et al. teaches priority level of connected to at least first and second telephone (agent) groups, each of which includes at least one telephone or agent. In addition, Sonnenberg teaches different predetermined areas used in a routing system (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg).

What Sumner et al. and Sonnenberg do not explicitly teach is the method of assigning calls to waiting table if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is not in the first table.

However, Arbel et al. teaches that a method and apparatus for handling incoming calls operable to be connected to at least first and second telephone groups, each of which includes at least one telephone, comprising a controller configured to control the exchange, wherein if the exchange receives an incoming call, the controller:

references the first table;

terminates a call in the first predetermined area to the telephone if each of the first predetermined area and second predetermined area in the waiting table has at least one call to be answered (Col. 7, line 42-Col. 8, line 5 & 16-23 of Arbel et al.); and/or

assigns the first predetermined area in the waiting table to the call if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is in the first table, and assigns the second predetermined area in the waiting table to the call if no telephone is available and the phone number of the call is not in the first table and/or then if the first telephone becomes available for answering a call to be answered (Col. 9, lines 51-57 of Arbel et al.), the controller:

terminates a call waiting to be answered in the first predetermined area to the first telephone if each of the first predetermined area and the second predetermined area in the waiting table has at least one call waiting to be answered (Col. 12, line 50-Col. 13, line 13 of Arbel et al.).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a re-routing program, as taught by Arbel et al., in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al. in view of Sonnenberg, because Sumner et al. already teaches as answering and connecting phone calls (Abstract of Sumner et al.). In addition, Sonnenberg teaches the assigning of calls within predetermined area.

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in connecting calls waiting to be answered. This prevents the call recipient from missing a business

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opportunity from an "important customer" or high priority call that may be left unanswered when there is large volume of incoming calls. Again, the "overflow" feature is an old and well known.

10. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sumner et al. (US Patent 5857018), and further in view of Sonnenberg (US Patent 5987114), and further in view of Hanai et al. (US Patent 5602904).

As to claim 18, Sonnenberg teaches priority in an incoming call with first highest priority calls; which reads on claimed an incoming call with high priority waiting, to be answered into the first predetermined area (Abstract and Col. 28, lines 4-25 of Sonnenberg), and a final lowest priority calls; which read on claimed an incoming call with low priority waiting, to be answered into the second predetermined area. In addition, Sumner et al. teaches an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD); which reads on claimed exchange, priority in an incoming call which is configured to store in RAM (Fig. 1:19 of Sumner et al.), with reference to the class of service table; which reads on claimed table; (Col. 2, line 65-Col. 3, line 20 of Sumner et al.) with one agent or telephone.

What Sumner et al. and Sonnenberg do not explicitly teach is the method of memory section in the table.

However, Hanai et al. teaches a system and method for allocating an incoming call to an available telephone with reference to its priority, comprising:

a destination information memory section (memory contains various memory and destination information tables) that be a destination information table; which reads on claimed table, that is configured to associate phone number with their priority; and is operable to be configured to be a waiting table that includes a trunk identification; which reads on claimed first predetermined area and a second predetermined area, and that is configured to store, with reference to the table (Col. 4, lines 5-8; Col. 5, lines 11-33; Col. 5, line 62-Col. 6, line 15; and Col. 7, lines 11-20 of Hanai et al.).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a main memory, as taught by Hanai et al., in the ACD with prioritization of Sumner et al. in view of Sonnenberg, because Sumner et al. already teaches a computer or CPU having a Random Access Memory (RAM) and Read Only Memory (ROM) (Col. 2, lines 10-18 & 65-67 of Sumner et al.).

The motivation of this combination would be to provide better customer service. The prioritizing system taught by Sumner et al. would be useful in controlling the ACD. This prevents the call recipient from being inconvenienced and inefficiency of the system.

Conclusion

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Janelle N. Young whose telephone number is (571) 272-2836. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday: 8:30 am through 4:00 pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ahmad Matar can be reached on (571) 272-7488. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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JNY
February 13, 2006


DUC NGUYEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER